

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

1. (Currently amended) An absorbent fibrous structure comprising a web of entangled synthetic fibers, said fibers being eccentric bicomponent fibers, and said web having a top surface and a bottom surface, and further having a center region wherein: (a) said fibers are not thermally bonded to one another in said center region; or (b) if said fibers are thermally bonded to one another in said center region, said web is characterized by a gradient of thermal bonding through the thickness of the web with a higher degree of thermal bonding at the top and bottom surfaces relative to the center region.

2. (Original) An absorbent fibrous structure as in Claim 1, wherein said web has an Ambient Temperature (22 C) Oil Absorbency of at least about 7 g/g.

3. (Original) An absorbent fibrous structure as in Claim 2, wherein fibers comprise a first, oleophilic component and a second component that is more hydrophilic than said first component and has a Tg or Tm of at least 120 C.

Claims 4-9. (Canceled)

10. (new) An absorbent structure as in Claim 1, wherein said web has a density of about 100 mg/cm³ or less.

11. (new) An absorbent structure as in Claim 10, wherein said web comprises eccentric bicomponent fibers having fiber length of at least about 2 cm.

12. (new) An absorbent structure as in Claim 3, wherein said web has a density of about 100 mg/cm³ or less.

13. (new) An absorbent structure as in Claim 12, wherein said web comprises eccentric bicomponent fibers having fiber length of at least about 2 cm.